

PERFIN WITH A CRETE CONNECTION

In April, MICHAEL CAREY wrote with a query about a 'perfin' on a Crete stamp on piece, illustrated along side.



Michael writes:- *"It appears to be (to my inexpert eye!) a good copy of the first 1898 issue of an imperforate 20 para "stamp" - locally handstruck in bright violet ink -for use within the British-administered Candia Province of Crete. It is on a fragment of envelope "front" apparently addressed to someone in an unspecified Brigade within the Province. It is "cancelled" with an equally bright violet hand stamp incorporating the Union Jack within a circle, with the word "TEMENOS" boxed under the flag.*

The stamp/label is perfined with the numerals "28". The perfin is approximately 8mm high and 12mm in width, in the format of 10,12.

If the item is genuine, the Stanley Gibbons Catalogue suggests that it is reasonably scarce/valuable - presumably without perfin. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who has more information on the stamp/label, the cancellation and/or the perfin numerals. "

Looking in the Bulletin Cumulative Index, there was one entry for Crete. When I turned to Bulletin 265 (Aug '93) Page 8, lo and behold, more about this very subject. As it will assist in going some way to answer this query, I will copy the article from Bulletin 265.

PERFIN WITH A CRETE CONNECTION from Mike Bavin

During the administration of Crete by France, Great Britain, Italy and Russia (1899-1908) stamps were issued for use in the British-controlled Province of Candia (now Heraklion). The first stamp, SG1, was handstruck in shades of violet with a face value of 20 parades. It is uncommon, currently valued by S.G. at £350 mint and £25 used (this was in 1993). The second part of the Dr. Maurice R. Friend collection, sold by Robson Lowe in Zurich on 23rd November 1982, contained an extraordinary cover. It was franked with no fewer than six of the above mentioned stamps, each perforated 28 (10,12) and cancelled by the TEMENOS Union Jack in violet. The cover was addressed to Lewis Hall Esq. and had an unidentified Regimental insignia on the flap. Lot No.370, valuation Swiss francs 4500, makes this one of the most valuable perfin covers in existence. The origin of the perfin, and details of other rare covers would be appreciated.

I, Rosemary Smith, was Editor at that time and there were no replies to this query. I have spoken to two of my postal history dealer acquaintances. One deals primarily with military postal history and the other world postal history. Both have seen quite a number of these stamps on, and off, cover but never with a perfin. They did tell me that all (c40) of the small garrisons on Crete at that time are mentioned in Barefoot's World Revenue book but there is no mention of them using a perfined stamp. Was there a 28th Regiment, Battalion or Brigade?

Can anyone add anything else to help solve this mystery?